



FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE NORTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3015550

Address: 4710 11th Avenue Northeast

Applicant: Matt Driscoll

Date of Meeting: Monday, March 17, 2014

Board Members Present: Salone Habibuddin
Joseph Hurley
Christina Pizana
Martine Zettle

Board Members Absent: Ivana Begley

DPD Staff Present: Bruce Rips

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial Three with a
65' height limit (NC3 65).



Zoning Pattern:	The site lies within a predominantly Neighborhood Commercial zone west of 15 th Ave NE. South of NE 47 th St., the height in the NC zone increases from 65' to 85'. To the north of NE 50 th St., multi-family Lowrise Three (LR3) prevails from the alley east of Roosevelt Way to University Way NE. To the west, between Roosevelt Way/9 th Ave NE and Interstate 5, the neighborhood possesses multifamily lowrise zoning classifications. The University Way NE corridor is primarily zoned Neighborhood Commercial with a pedestrian overlay.
Lot Area:	6,000 square feet. The site slopes from the highest point along the alley to the lowest point on the southwest with a difference of approximately four feet.
Current Development:	The site contains two single family residences.
Access:	Alley access. Major streets include I-5 and Roosevelt Way NE to the west, NE 45 th St. to the south, NE 50 th St to the north and 11 th Ave in which the site borders. 11 th Ave serves as a bus route with a stop situated just to the south of the subject parcel.
Surrounding Development & Neighborhood Character:	The site lies within the University District, an urban center, which includes University of Washington and its surroundings, catering, in part, to the collegiate experience. The vicinity includes a variety of uses from single family residences to commercial. New large scale development of mixed use structures and auto oriented sales and services are currently being permitted or constructed. New development includes the University Audi dealership and garage across 11 th Ave, the mixed use building called The Curve, an Avalon Bay residential project, and a Residence Inn by Marriot all to the south of NE 47 th St.
ECAs:	No environmental critical area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes to design and build a seven-story mixed use building with 40 residential units above 1,300 square feet of ground level commercial space. Parking for four vehicles would be located within the structure.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

The applicant's submittal illustrates three design options. They share a similar program of one floor of commercial space facing 11th Ave, parking at the rear of the first floor accessed from the alley and residential units on levels two through six. Above the first floor, Option 1 in plan forms a fattened "I" shape with light wells on the north and south sides. Three units per floor face west, three units look east and two units peer south. An elevator core projects from the north façade dividing the light well into two. The upper floors extend over the ground floor on the east and west sides. Two stair towers are expressed on the 11th Ave and the alley facades along with sawtooth shaped bays. In plan, Option # 2 forms a symmetrical plan with a double loaded corridor at the residential floors. The circulation spine extends east and west with four units on each side. Four light wells serves as modulation on the north and south facades. The massing appears symmetrical along the bilateral division. Similar to the first option, a series of serrated bays extend above and over the ground floor. Here too, the west facing stairwell appears open in elevation and centered on the central corridor.

The "C" shaped option # 3 places much of the vertical and horizontal circulation on the north elevation with corridors extending to the south. Units face east, west and south with a large void or light well on the south. Images from the booklet display extensive glazing along the storefronts, angled (serrated) bays with generous fenestration and an open staircase on the west. A habitable roof would provide an open air amenity for the tenants.

By the Recommendation meeting, the applicant refined Option # 2 with an open, central stair visible to the street flanked by four columns of projecting, angled bays. Responding to earlier guidance, the 11th Ave façade has a clear base (storefront glazing and metal mesh), middle (dominated by five floors of projecting bays of metal and fiber cement panels) and a top of weathered steel panel surrounding square-shaped punched windows.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Four members of the public affixed their names to the Recommendation meeting sign-in sheet. One person remarked that the open stairs are an engaging building element but that the entrance should convey a greater sense of arrival.

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance. The Board identified the Citywide Design Guidelines & Neighborhood specific guidelines (as applicable) of highest priority for this project.

The Neighborhood specific guidelines are summarized below. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

A. Site Planning

A-2 **Streetscape Compatibility.** The siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce the existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way.

University-specific supplemental guidance:

Context: Reinforcing the pedestrian streetscape and protecting public view corridors are particularly important site planning issues. Stepping back upper floors allows more sunlight to reach the street, minimizes impact to views, and maintains the low- to medium rise character of the streetscape. Roof decks providing open space for mixed-use development can be located facing the street so that upper stories are, in effect, set back.

Guideline - Solar Orientation: Minimizing shadow impacts is important in the University neighborhood. The design of a structure and its massing on the site can enhance solar exposure for the project and minimize shadow impacts onto adjacent public areas between March 21st and September 21st. This is especially important on blocks with narrow rights-of-way relative to other neighborhood streets, including University Way, south of NE 50th Street.

A-3 **Entrances Visible from the Street.** Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.

University-specific supplemental guidance:

Context: Another way to emphasize human activity and pedestrian orientation, particularly along Mixed Use Corridors, is to provide clearly identifiable storefront entries. In residential projects, walkways and entries promote visual access and security.

Guidelines:

1. **On Mixed Use Corridors, primary business and residential entrances should be oriented to the commercial street.**

2. In residential projects, except townhouses, it is generally preferable to have one walkway from the street that can serve several building entrances.
3. When a courtyard is proposed for a residential project, the courtyard should have at least one entry from the street.
4. In residential projects, front yard fences over four (4) feet in height that reduce visual access and security should be avoided.

The position of the residential entry to the side of the central organizing element, the open staircase, rather than beneath appears disconcerting. The Board recommends locating the entrance within the same vertical bay as the stairs. This action preserves the clarity of the original parti in which the Board members found so compelling at the EDG meeting. Revise the portion of the facade currently shown as the gate into the entry foyer to have the same storefront glazing system as the commercial spaces.

The underside of the stairs---so visible to the pedestrian---troubled the Board members. Revise the stairs to eliminate the visibility of its underside from the pedestrian realm.

A-4 Human Activity. New development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity on the street.

University-specific supplemental guidance:

Context: Pedestrian orientation and activity should be emphasized in the University Community, particularly along Mixed Use Corridors. While most streets feature narrow sidewalks relative to the volume of pedestrian traffic, wider sidewalks and more small open spaces for sitting, street musicians, bus waiting, and other activities would benefit these areas. Pedestrian-oriented open spaces, such as wider sidewalks and plazas, are encouraged as long as the setback does not detract from the “street wall.”

Guidelines: On Mixed Use Corridors, where narrow sidewalks exist (less than 15’ wide), consider recessing entries to provide small open spaces for sitting, street musicians, bus waiting, or other pedestrian activities. Recessed entries should promote pedestrian movement and avoid blind corners.

A-5 Respect for Adjacent Sites. Buildings should respect adjacent properties by being located on their sites to minimize disruption of the privacy and outdoor activities of residents in adjacent buildings.

University-specific supplemental guidance:

Context: This Citywide Design Guideline is particularly important where a building’s back side, service areas or parking lots could impact adjacent residential uses. Map 2 (page 8) shows potential impact areas—these are where Lowrise zones abut commercial zones.

Guideline: Special attention should be paid to projects in the zone edge areas as depicted in Map 2 to ensure impacts to Lowrise zones are minimized as described in A-5 of the Citywide Design Guidelines.

The applicant removed the four projecting bays from the uppermost floor to express the mezzanine and to better relate the building mass to the lower building to the south. This complied with the Board's earlier guidance.

- A-6 Transition Between Residence and Street. For residential projects, the space between the building and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and encourage social interaction among residents and neighbors.**

B. Height, Bulk and Scale

- B-1 Height, Bulk, and Scale Compatibility. Projects should be compatible with the scale of development anticipated by the applicable Land Use Policies for the surrounding area and should be sited and designed to provide a sensitive transition to near-by, less intensive zones. Projects on zone edges should be developed in a manner that creates a step in perceived height, bulk, and scale between anticipated development potential of the adjacent zones.**

University-specific supplemental guidance:

Context: The residential areas are experiencing a change from houses to block-like apartments. Also, the proximity of lower intensive zones to higher intensive zones requires special attention to potential impacts of increased height, bulk and scale. These potential impact areas are shown in Map 4. The design and siting of buildings is critical to maintaining stability and Lowrise character.

Guideline: Special attention should be paid to projects in the following areas to minimize impacts of increased height, bulk and scale as stated in the Citywide Design Guideline.

The architect refined the 11th Ave. façade to more clearly delineate a base, middle and top in accordance with the Board's prior guidance. By eliminating the upper most projecting bays, the architect reveals the mezzanine level. The mass visually steps down the façade to more closely relate to the height of the adjacent building.

C. Architectural Elements and Materials

- C-1 Architectural Context. New buildings proposed for existing neighborhoods with a well-defined and desirable character should be compatible with or complement the architectural character and siting pattern of neighboring buildings.**

University-specific supplemental guidance:

Context: Buildings in the University Community feature a broad range of building types with an equally broad range of architectural character. Because of the area's variety, no single architectural style or character emerges as a dominant direction for new construction. As an example, the University of Washington campus sets a general direction in architectural style and preference for masonry and cast stone materials, however, new buildings on and off campus incorporate the general massing and materials of this character, rather than replicating it.

Guidelines:

1. Although no single architectural style or character emerges as a dominant direction for new construction in the University Community, project applicants should show how the proposed design incorporates elements of the local architectural character especially when there are buildings of local historical significance or landmark status in the vicinity.
2. For areas within Ravenna Urban Village, particularly along 25th Avenue NE, the style of architecture is not as important so long as it emphasizes pedestrian orientation and avoids large-scale, standardized and auto-oriented characteristics.
3. On Mixed Use Corridors, consider breaking up the façade into modules of not more than 50 feet (measured horizontally parallel to the street) on University Way and 100 feet on other corridors, corresponding to traditional platting and building construction.
4. When the defined character of a block, including adjacent or facing blocks, is comprised of historic buildings, or groups of buildings of local historic importance and character, as well as street trees or other significant vegetation (as identified in the 1975 Inventory and subsequent updating), the architectural treatment of new development should respond to this local historical character.
5. Buildings in Lowrise zones should provide a "fine-grained" architectural character.

- C-2 Architectural Concept and Consistency.** Building design elements, details and massing should create a well-proportioned and unified building form and exhibit an overall architectural concept. Buildings should exhibit form and features identifying the functions within the building. In general, the roofline or top of the structure should be clearly distinguished from its facade walls.

The clarity of the concept drawings illustrated in the EDG packet lost their resonance during the evolution of the 11th Ave. façade. A simpler elevation, achievable by specific changes, would return the spirit of the design to its initial essence or quiddity. The Board recommended the following changes: revise the two outer bays to resemble the two bays flanking the open stairs, reduce the depth of the balconies to railings or Juliette balconies, and wrap the weathered steel to include all of the bays closest to the street on the north and south elevations. Other refinements to the west façade are discussed in guidance for A-3 and C-4.

- C-3 Human Scale. The design of new buildings should incorporate architectural features, elements, and details to achieve a good human scale.**

Revise the overhead weather protection above the storefront façade and residential entry for greater consistency. The design presented to the Board had three or four different canopies of varying materials for a relatively small amount of linear frontage.

- C-4 Exterior Finish Materials. Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.**

University-specific supplemental guidance:

Guidelines:

1. New buildings should emphasize durable, attractive, and well-detailed finish materials, including: Brick; Concrete; Cast stone, natural stone, tile; Stucco and stucco-like panels; Art tile; Wood.
2. Sculptural cast stone and decorative tile are particularly appropriate because they relate to campus architecture and Art Deco buildings. Wood and cast stone are appropriate for moldings and trim.
3. The materials listed below are discouraged and should only be used if they complement the building's architectural character and are architecturally treated for a specific reason that supports the building and streetscape character: Masonry units; Metal siding; Wood siding and shingles; Vinyl siding; Sprayed-on finish; Mirrored glass.
4. Where anodized metal is used for window and door trim, then care should be given to the proportion and breakup of glazing to reinforce the building concept and proportions.
5. Fencing adjacent to the sidewalk should be sited and designed in an attractive and pedestrian oriented manner.
6. Awnings made of translucent material may be backlit, but should not overpower neighboring light schemes. Lights, which direct light downward, mounted from the awning frame are acceptable. Lights that shine from the exterior down on the awning are acceptable.
7. Light standards should be compatible with other site design and building elements.

Signs

Context: The Citywide Design Guidelines do not provide guidance for new signs. New guidelines encourage signs that reinforce the character of the building and the neighborhood.

Guidelines:

1. The following sign types are encouraged, particularly along Mixed Use Corridors – Pedestrian oriented shingle or blade signs extending from the building front just above pedestrians; Marquee signs and signs on pedestrian canopies; Neon signs; Carefully executed window signs; such as etched glass or hand painted signs; Small signs on awnings or canopies.
2. Post mounted signs are discouraged.

3. The location and installation of signage should be integrated with the building's architecture.
4. Monument signs should be integrated into the development, such as on a screen wall.

Deliberation focused on the metal mesh screen along the 11th Ave. frontage. Upon viewing a sample of the mesh, the Board approved the use of this specific tartan grid.

The weathered steel on the 11th elevation must wrap around to include the entire bay on each of the north and south elevations closest to the street. This will visually simplify the facades and add high quality materials to areas of the building most visible from the sidewalk and street.

The visibility from the sidewalk of the metal decking for the underside of the stair landings disturbed the Board members. Change the metal to a higher quality material. See guidance for A-3.

The sign mounted on the mesh screen appears too low and possesses a lettering style not in keeping with the contemporary quality of the building. The Board recommends placing the sign at a higher location and revising the lettering style.

D. Pedestrian Environment

- D-1 Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances.** Convenient and attractive access to the building's entry should be provided. To ensure comfort and security, paths and entry areas should be sufficiently lighted and entry areas should be protected from the weather. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian-oriented open space should be considered.

University-specific supplemental guidance:

Context: The University Community would like to encourage, especially on Mixed Use Corridors, the provision of usable, small open spaces, such as gardens, courtyards, or plazas that are visible and/or accessible to the public. Therefore, providing ground-level open space is an important public objective and will improve the quality of both the pedestrian and residential environment.

Guidelines:

1. On Mixed Use Corridors, consider setting back a portion of the building to provide small pedestrian open spaces with seating amenities. The building façades along the open space must still be pedestrian-oriented.
2. On Mixed Use Corridors, entries to upper floor residential uses should be accessed from, but not dominate, the street frontage. On corner locations, the main residential entry should be on the side street with a small courtyard that provides a transition between the entry and the street.

- D-6 Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities, and Service Areas.** Building sites should locate service elements like trash dumpsters, loading docks and mechanical equipment away from the street front where possible. When elements such as dumpsters, utility meters, mechanical units and service areas cannot be located away from the street front, they should be situated and screened from view and should not be located in the pedestrian right-of-way.
- D-7 Personal Safety and Security.** Project design should consider opportunities for enhancing personal safety and security in the environment under review.
- D-10 Commercial Lighting.** Appropriate levels of lighting should be provided in order to promote visual interest and a sense of security for people in commercial districts during evening hours. Lighting may be provided by incorporation into the building façade, the underside of overhead weather protection, on and around street furniture, in merchandising display windows, in landscaped areas, and/or on signage.
- Use high quality lighting to signify the importance of the central open stairs. In order for land use staff to review the lighting provide both an evening rendering of the appearance of the stair tower from a pedestrian view and the type of fixtures.
- D-11 Commercial Transparency.** Commercial storefronts should be transparent, allowing for a direct visual connection between pedestrians on the sidewalk and the activities occurring on the interior of a building. Blank walls should be avoided.
- D-12 Residential Entries and Transitions.** For residential projects in commercial zones, the space between the residential entry and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and a visually interesting street front for pedestrians. Residential buildings should enhance the character of the streetscape with small gardens, stoops and other elements that work to create a transition between the public sidewalk and private entry.

E. Landscaping

- E-2 Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site.** Landscaping, including living plant material, special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, site furniture, and similar features should be appropriately incorporated into the design to enhance the project.

The Board did not comment upon the landscape plan.

Recommendations: The recommendations summarized below were based on the plans and models submitted at the March 17th, 2014 meeting. Design, siting or architectural details not specifically identified or altered in these recommendations are expected to remain as presented in the plans and other drawings available at the March 17, 2014 public meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities, and reviewing the plans and renderings, the Design Review Board

members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design with conditions and the requested development standard departure from the requirements of the Land Use Code (listed below). The Board recommends the following CONDITIONS for the project. (Authority referred in the letter and number in parenthesis):

- 1) Locate the residential entrance on 11th Ave NE within the same vertical bay as the stairs. This action preserves the clarity of the original parti noted at the EDG meeting. (A-3)
- 2) Revise the portion of the facade currently shown as the gate into the entry foyer to possess the same storefront glazing system as the commercial spaces. (A-3)
- 3) Provide the following changes to the elevations: revise the stairs to eliminate the visibility of its underside from the pedestrian realm and change the metal decking to a higher quality material (A-3, C-4); change the two outer bays to resemble the two bays flanking the open stairs (C-2); reduce the depth of the balconies to railings or Juliette balconies (C-2); and wrap the weathered steel to include all of the bays closest to the street on the north and south elevations (C-2, C-4).
- 4) Revise the overhead weather protection above the storefront façade and residential entry for greater consistency. (C-3)
- 5) **Move the sign mounted to the metal mesh to eye level or above and revise the lettering style in keeping the contemporary style of the building. (C-4)**
- 6) Use high quality lighting to signify the importance of the central open stairs. The land use planner will review and approve the lighting based on an evening rendering of the appearance of the stair tower from a pedestrian view and the type of fixtures. (D-10)

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) are based upon the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall design than could be achieved without the departure(s).

STANDARD	REQUIREMENT	REQUEST	JUSTIFICATION	RECOMMEND- ATION
1. Street Level Facing Facades SMC 23.47A.008A.3	Street-level, street-facing facades shall be located within 10' of the structure lot line unless wider sidewalks, plazas or other approved landscaped or open spaces are provided.	Proposes a portion of the street-level, street-facing facades to be 33'5 1/2" from the lot line.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creates a gated, covered entry court. 	Recommended approval based on meeting conditions.